



There's no time to waste!



26 3 2

Chapter 1 by Lokman Salikoon

As the room dispensed its poisonous content out to the outer atmosphere, just like how this catastrophe stirred out of controlled, suddenly a loud gasp of inhaled air rushed back into Jason's crippled lungs. For a split second, he was thrown back to reality, white wash engulfing his paralysing body, in peacefulness. The next moment, a shearing stab-like pain, spreads in his inner chest, like when you breathe in powdered spice. "John, look at me. Remember me, Jake, the one who gave you that Elvin broken lawn chair. I need you to read my lips! Read them. Your ears temporarily deaf from the sudden blood flow rushing to your head. You'll be fine, just don't breathe too hard. Your new lungs needs to get use to its new owner." Jake reaches into his worned out messenger bag and pulled out a cube-like weigh. Jason, looking ever so in despair, snapped back to give distance while pointing at it. It was known at times of peril, according to ancient folklore many eons ago, these were tools of great assistance. They were left at the four corners of our existence to lead a few chosen ones to their destiny. With no means of communication, Jake helped hobbled Jason across the barren rubble of what we use to call hope, sat him down and hastily said, "Does that cube come with an instruction cos, I don't know bout you but i'm not stay with that thing, especially when its blinking REALLY RED now!"

Chapter 2 by intellikat



Jason, John, and Jake all began laughing.

"I hope it does," Jason chuckled. "Otherwise we're all goners, right?"

John lifted his foldable Elvin(tm) lawn chair from his backpack and set it up. With a smirk, he sat and folded his legs. "Thanks for the chair, Jake. A little bit of work and she's good as new!"

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Jake lifted a small glass jar from his pocket. "Does that come with an instruction in some powdered spice? It's our last chance to get..."

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"God," muttered John. "Is your mother going to be onboard? Give me a hit of that curry!"

Chapter 3 by Luke Meyers



Jake tossed him the jar, and John placed his double nozzle over the spouts in the cap. Sticking the prongs gingerly up his nostrils, he squeezed the actuator and inhaled, coughing as it hit the back of his throat. Jake and Jason smirked at each other, and Jason gently took the spice jar from John's hand as his friend slumped back into the chair and closed his eyes. A contented smile spread across his face.

Behind John's eyelids, shifting colors and shapes began to flow. He warm comfort within his mind, as if entering a pleasant and cozy dream, but he remained awake and lucid. The faint shapes grew stronger and more vivid, and soon he felt transported to a wonderful cartoon dimension, wallpapered in neon and racing with activity.

Strange, shining beings zipped around him in some convoluted network of energy. They seemed playful, encouraging. He felt as if he could extend a part of himself into them, see everything from multiple perspectives at once. He had the sensation of his body floating up, and towards something. In the distance hovered a giant, incredible artifact of incalculable size. It whirred with motion, crawled with life.

As his gaze fell upon it, one aspect of his perception picked up a transmission like a slide show directly to his visual cortex. It was a flashing series of symbols, incomprehensible alien glyphs flashing past far too quickly to process. "It's okay," came a thought that felt natural, more a sense of knowledge than something being said. "Just watch." So he watched, and let it soak into him as he drifted. Somehow, he seemed to be making progress. This was something important! It had to happen! Some kind of connection was being made.

The glyphs began to slow, or perhaps his mind found its pace. As they did, they gradually began to resolve into sense. First just flashes of strange things that were almost words, then a word salad, but finally meaning began to emerge. He seized upon it, repeated it to himself, held it tight as the visions faded.

John opened his eyes and regarded his companions seriously. "I have a message from them. There's no time to waste!"

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